The Republic of the Future

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OR

SOCIALISM A REALITY

BY

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CASSELL & COMPANY, LIMITED,

739 & 741 BROADWAY, NEW YORK.

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Press W. L. Mershon & Co.,
Rahway, N. J.

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LETTERS FROM A SWEDISH NOBLEMAN LIVING IN THE 21ST CENTURY TO A FRIEND IN CHRISTIANIA.

The Republic of the Future.

I.

NEW YORK SOCIALISTIC CITY,

December 1st, 2050 A. D.

DEAR HANNEVIG:

At last, as you see, my journey is safely accomplished, and I am fairly landed in the midst of this strange socialistic society. To say that I was landed, is to make use of so obsolete an expression that it must entirely fail to convey to you a true idea of the processes

of the journey. Had I written—I was safely *shot* into the country—this would much more graphically describe to you the method of my arrival.

You may remember, perhaps, that before starting I found myself in very grave doubt as to which route to take—whether to come by balloon or by tunnel. As the latter route would enable me to enjoy an entirely novel spectacle, that of viewing sub-marine scenery, I chose, and wisely I now know, to come by the Pneumatic Tube Electric Company. The comforts and luxuries of this sub-marine route are beyond belief. The perfection of the contrivances for supplying hot and cold air, for instance, during the journey, are such that the passengers are enabled to have almost any temperature at command. The cars are indeed marked 70° Fahr., 80° and 100°. One buys one's seat according

to his taste for climate. Many of the travellers, I noticed, booked themselves for the bath department, remaining the entire journey in the Turkish, Russian, vapor or plunge departments—as the various baths attached to this line surpass a Roman voluptuary's dream of such luxuries. I, however, never having been through the great tunnel before, was naturally more interested in what was passing so swiftly before my eyes. The speed at which we were shot was terriffic—five miles to the minute—making the journey of three thousand miles just ten hours long. In spite of the swiftness of our transit, we were enabled by the aid of the instantaneous photographic process, as applied to opera-glasses and telescopes, to feel that we lost nothing by the rapidity of our meteor-like passage. I was totally unprepared for the beauties and the novelties which met

II.

DEAR HANNEVIG:

The three days' time which has elapsed since my last letter to you, has been so crowded with a confusion of bewildered impressions produced by this astonishing city and its still more astonishing inhabitants, that I am in doubt whether I shall be able to convey to you any clearer pictures than those which fill the disordered canvas of my own mind. I will, however, strive to reproduce my experiences in the order in which they came to me, and allow you to draw your own conclusions.

The first amazing thing that happened to me was the way in which I reached my hotel. Fancy being blown up on the shore, for the pneumatic tube being many hundreds of feet below the shore level, we were literally blown up on the beach; there we found air-balloon omnibuses, into which we and our luggage were transported by means of little electrical cars, running on an inclined plane. The balloon rose about a thousand feet into the air, affording a fine view of the city. Great is not a large enough word to describe so vast a city as this city of the Socialists—it has the immensity of an unending plain, and the flatness of one also. In former times, I believe, the original city was an island, on either side of which flowed a river; but as more and more land became necessary new channels for these rivers were dug, and the river-beds filled in, so that now,

far as the eye can reach, there is a limitless expanse of roof-tops.

As seen from an aerial elevation, there was nothing to attract the eye from the picturesque standpoint—there were few large buildings of noticeable size or beauty. The city was chiefly remarkable because of its immensity. When landed at my hotel I found these first impressions confirmed by a nearer view.

First let me tell you, however, that after entering the vestibule of the hotel, I felt as if I had stepped into some dwelling of gnomes or sprites. Not a human being presented himself. No one appeared to take my luggage, nor was a clerk or hall boy visible anywhere. The great hall of the hotel was as deserted and silent as an empty tomb; at first I could not even discover a bell. Presently, however, I saw a huge iron hand pointing to an adjacent table. On the

table lay a big book with a placard on which was printed, "*Please write name, country, length of stay and number of rooms desired.*" All of which I did. The book then miraculously closed itself and disappeared! The next instant a tray made its appearance where the book had been, on the tray was a key, and on the key a tag with a number and the words, "*Take elevator at your left to third flight.*" The elevator as I stepped into it, stopped as if by magic at the third story, when another iron hand shot out of the wall, pointing me to the left. Soon I found the room assigned me, opened it, and entered to discover the apartment in complete order, and the faucets in the bath-chamber actually turned on!

My dear Hannevig, can you believe me when I tell you that I have been in this hotel four mortal days, have eaten three substantial meals

a day, have been fairly comfortable, and yet have not seen a human creature, from a landlord to a servant? The whole establishment apparently is run by machinery. There is a complicated bell apparatus which you ring for every conceivable want or need. Meals are served in one's own room, by a system of ingenious sliding shelves, which open and shut, and disappear into the wall in the most wizard-like manner. Of course the reason of all these contrivances is obvious enough. In a society where labor of a degrading order is forbidden by law, machinery must be used as its substitute. It is all well enough, I presume, from the laborer's point of view. But for a traveller, bent on a pleasure trip, machinery as a substitute for a garrulous landlord, and a score of servants, however bad, is found to be a poor and somewhat monotonous companion. I

amuse myself, however, with perpetually testing all the bells and the electrical apparatus, calling for a hundred things I don't want, to see whether they will come through the ceiling or up the floor.

Most of my time, however, is spent in the streets. My earlier impressions of the city I find remain unchanged. It is as flat as your hand and as monotonous as a twice-told tale. Never was there such monotony or such dullness. Each house is precisely like its neighbor. Each house has so many rooms, so many windows, so many square feet of garden, which latter no one cultivates, as flowers and grass entail a certain amount of manual labor, which, it appears, is thought to be degrading by these socialists. Imagine, therefore, miles upon miles of a city composed of little two-story houses as like one unto another as two brown nuts. There

are parks and theatres and museums, and libraries, the Peoples' Clubs, and innumerable state buildings; but these are all architecturally tasteless, as utility has been the only feature considered in their construction. Every thing here, from the laying out of the city to the last detail concerning the affairs of commerce or trade is arranged according to the socialistic principle—by the people for the People. The city itself was rebuilt a hundred years ago, in order that the houses and the public buildings might be in more fitting harmony with the new order and principles of Socialism. What the older City of New York may have been, it is difficult to determine, although it is supposed to have been ugly enough. But this modern city is the very acme of dreariness. It is the monotony I think, which chiefly depresses me. It is not that the

houses do not seem comfortable, clean and orderly, for all these virtues they possess. But fancy seeing miles upon miles of little two-story houses! The total lack of contrast which is the result of the plan on which this socialistic city has been built, comes, of course, from the principle which has decreed that no man can have any finer house or better interior, or finer clothes than his neighbor. The abolition of poverty, and the raising of all classes to a common level of comfort and security, has resulted in the most deadening uniformity. Take for example, the aspect of the shop windows. All shops are run by the government on government capital. There is, consequently, neither rivalry nor competition. The shop keepers, who are in reality only clerks and salesmen under government jurisdiction, take naturally, no personal or vital interest either

in the amount of goods sold, or in the way in which these latter are placed before the public. The shop-windows, therefore, are as uninviting as are the goods displayed. Only useful, necessary objects and articles are to be seen. The eye seeks in vain throughout the length and breadth of the city for any thing really beautiful, for the lovely, or the rare. Objects of art and of beauty find, it seems, no market here. Occasionally the Government makes a purchase of some foreign work of art, or seizes on some on some of those recently excavated from the ruins of some 19th century merchant's palace. The picture or vase is then placed in the museums, where the people are supposed to enjoy its possession.

To connect the word enjoyment with the aspect of these serious socialists is almost

laughable. A more sober collection of people I never beheld. They are as solemn as the oldest and wisest of owls. They have the look of people who have come to the end of things and who have failed to find it amusing. The entire population appear to be eternally in the streets, wandering up and down, with their hands in their pockets, on the lookout for something that never happens. What indeed, is there to happen? Have they not come to the consummation of everything, of their dreams and their hopes and desires? A man can't have his dream and dream it too. Realization has been found before now, to be exceedingly dull play.

As it is, I am free to confess, that the dullness and apathy of these ideally-perfect socialists weighs on me. My views of their condition

my eye at every turn. The sight-seers' car is admirably arranged. Fancy being able to take in all the wonders of ocean-land through large glass port-holes in the concave sides of circular cars. The tube itself, which is of iron, enormously thick, has glass sides, also of huge thickness, running parallel with the windows of the car so that the view is unobstructed. The sensations awakened, therefore, both by the novelty of the situation and by the wonders we passed in review, combined to make the journey thrillingly exciting. We were swept, for instance, past armies of fishes, beautiful to behold in such masses, shimmering in their opalescent armor as they rose above, or sank out of sight into the depths below. The sudden depressions and abrupt elevations of the sea-level made the scenery full of diversity. There was a great abundance of color, with the vivid crimson of

the coralline plants and the delicate pinks and yellows of the many varieties of the sub-marine flora. It seemed at times as if we were caught in a liquid cloud of amber, or were to be enmeshed in a grove of giant sea-weeds.

Beyond all else, however, in point of interest, was the spectacle of the wholesale cannibalism going on among the finny tribes, a cannibalism which still exists, in spite of the persistent and unwearying exertions of the numerous Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty among Cetacea and Crustacea. We passed any number of small boats darting in and out among the porpoises, dolphins and smaller fish, delivering supplies (of proper Christian food) and punishing offenders. A sub-marine missionary, who chanced to sit next to me, told me that of all vertebrate or invertebrate animals, the fish is the least amenable to reformatory discipline; fishes

appear to have been born, he went on to say without the most rudimentary form of the moral instinct, and curiously enough, only flourish in proportion as they are allowed to act out their original degenerate nature. He also confessed privately to me, that after some twenty-five years active work among them, the results of his labors were most discouraging. Since, however, the Buddhistic doctrine of metempsychosis has come to be so universally accepted, and as each one of these poor creatures is in reality a soul in embryo, it behoves mankind to do all that lies in its power to elevate all tribes and species.

As you may well imagine, my dear Hannevig, with such spectacles and speculations to enliven the journey, I found it all too short. Its shortness was, in truth, the only drawback to my complete enjoyment. The wonders of the

journey, I found, were, however, only a fitting prelude to the surprises that awaited me on my arrival. I leave an account of both these surprises and of my first impressions of the great city until my next letter, as this one, I find, has already grown to the proportions of an ancient epistle.

I am, my dear Hunnevig,

Your life-long friend and comrade,

WOLFGANG.

daughter, a plain but seemingly agreeable, intelligent young woman. The women dress so exactly like the men in this country that it is somewhat difficult to tell the sexes apart. Women, however, usually betray themselves as soon as they speak by their voices.

This young lady had an unusually pleasant voice and manner, and we were soon deep in the agreeable intricacies of a lengthy conversation. I had any number of questions to ask, and she appeared to be most willing to answer them.

My first question, I remember, was an eminently practical one. It was on the subject of chimneys and cooking. I had noticed almost immediately on my arrival that, throughout the entire city, not a chimney was to be seen. It was this fact more than any other that gave the city the appearance of a plain, and made the

houses seem curiously deformed. It naturally followed that, there being no chimneys, there was also no smoke, which therefore made this already sufficiently clear atmosphere as pure as the air on a mountain-top. All very beautiful, I said to myself, but how do the people get along without cooking? I, in my quality of stranger and foreigner, had made the interesting discovery that my own meals were prepared to my taste by specially appointed State cooks—a law only recently passed to facilitate international relations. The latter, it appears, had become somewhat strained, when travelers had found themselves forced to abide by the rules and regulations governing the socialists' diet. But what was this diet? This was the mystery which had been puzzling me ever since my arrival. So that when I found myself face to face with my young lady,

I promptly implored her to solve my dilemma. "Oh," she replied, "cooking has gone out long ago. To do any cooking is considered dreadfully old-fashioned." "Has eating also gone out of fashion in this wonderful country?" I asked in amazement.

She laughed as she replied, "Eating hasn't, but we do it in a more refined way. Instead of kitchens we now have conduits, culinary conduits."

"Culinary conduits?" I asked, still in a daze of wonderment.

"Oh, I see you don't understand," she answered; "you haven't been here long enough to know how such things are arranged. Let me explain. The State scientists now regulate all such matters. Once a month our Officer of Hygiene comes and examines each member of the household. He then prescribes the kind of

food he thinks you require for the next few weeks, whether it shall be more or less phosphates, or cereals, or carnivorous preparations. He leaves a paper with you. You then touch this spring—see?" and here she put her pretty white finger on a button in the wall. "You whistle through the aperture to the Culinary Board, put in the paper, and it is sent to the main office. You then receive supplies for the ensuing month."

"And where is this wonderful board?"

"It is in Chicago, where all the great granaries are. You know Chicago supplies the food for the entire United Community."

"But Chicago is a thousand miles off. Isn't all the food stale by the time it reaches you?"

Here she laughed, although I could see she tried very hard not to do so. But my ignorance was evidently too amazingly funny. When she

had regained composure she answered: "The food is sent to us by electricity through the culinary conduits. Every thing is blown to us in a few minutes' time, if it be necessary, if the food is to be eaten hot. If the food be cereals or condensed meats, it is sent by pneumatic express, done up in bottles or in pellets. All such food is carried about in one's pocket. We take our food as we drink water, wherever we may happen to be, when it's handy and when we need it. Although," she added with a sigh, "I sometimes do wish I had lived in the good old times, in the nineteenth century, for instance, when such dear old-fashioned customs were in vogue as having four-hour dinners, and the ladies were taken into dinner by the gentlemen and every one wore full dress—the dress of the period, and they used to flirt—wasn't that the old word? over their wine and dessert.

How changed every thing is now! However," she quickly added, "if kitchens and cooking and long dinners hadn't been abolished, the final emancipation of women could never have been accomplished. The perfecting of the woman movement was retarded for hundreds of years, as you know, doubtless, by the slavish desire of women to please their husbands by dressing and cooking to suit them. When the last pie was made into the first pellet, woman's true freedom began. She could then cast off her subordination both to her husband and to her servants. Women were only free, indeed, when the State prohibited the hiring of servants. Of course, the hiring of servants at all was as degrading to the oppressed class as it was a clog to the progress of their mistresses' freedom. The only way to raise the race was to put every one on the same level,

to make even degrees of servitude impossible."

"But how, may I be permitted to ask, is the rest of the housework accomplished, if no servants exist to take charge of so pretty a house as this one?" (The house, my dear Hannevig, was in reality hideous, as bare and as plain as are all the houses here. Each is furnished by state law, exactly alike).

"Oh, every thing is done by machinery, as at your hotel. Every thing, the sweeping, bed making, window scrubbing and washing. Each separate department has its various appliances and apparatus. The women of every household are taught the use and management of the various machines, you know, at the expense of the state, during their youth; when they take the management of a house they can run it single-handed. Most of the machinery goes

by electricity. A house can be kept in perfect order by two hours' work daily. The only hard work which we still have to do is dusting. No invention has yet been effected which dusts satisfactorily without breakage to ornaments, which accounts for the fact, also, that the fashion of having odds and ends about a home has gone out. It was voted years ago by the largest womans' vote ever polled, that since men could not create self-adjusting, non-destructive dusters, their homes must suffer. Women were not to be degraded to hand machines for the sake of ministering to men's æsthetic tastes. So you see we have only the necessary chairs and tables. If men want to see pictures thy can go to the museums"

Perhaps it is this latter fact which accounts for my never being able to find the good citizen A——at home. He is gone to the public club,

or to the bath, or to the Communal Theater, I am told, when I appear again and again. This wonderful community has done much, of that I am convinced, in the development of ideal freedom; but there appears to be a fatal blight somewhere in its principles, a blight which seems to have destroyed all delight in domestic life. In my next I will tell you more and at length, of the peculiar development which the race has attained under these now well-established emancipation doctrines, and of their results on the two sexes.

I hope you are not wearying of my somewhat lengthy descriptions, but you yourself are to blame, as you bound me to such rigid promises of detail and accuracy.

Farewell, dear companion, would you were here to use your wiser philosopher's eyes.

I am yours, WOLFGANG.

IV.

DEAR FRIEND: No one thing, I think, strikes the foreigner's eye, on his arrival in this extraordinary land so strongly as does the lack of variety and of taste displayed in the dress of either the men or the women. Both sexes dress, to begin with, as I said in my last, precisely alike. As it is one of the unwritten social laws of the people to dress as simply, economically and sensibly as possible, it results that there is neither brightness nor color nor beauty of line in any of the garments worn. In

passing the Government Clothing Distribution Bureaus, nothing so forcibly suggests the ideal equality existing between the sexes, as does the sight of the big and the little trowsers, hanging side by side, quite unabashed, the straight and the baggy legs being the only discernible difference. Baggy trowsers and a somewhat long, full cloak for the women—straight-legged trowsers and a shorter coat for the men, this is the dress of the entire population. Some of the women are still pretty, in spite of their hideous clothes. But they all tell me, they wouldn't be if they could help it, as they hold that the beauty of their sex was the chief cause of their long-continued former slavery. They consider comeliness now as a brand and mark of which to be ashamed. From what I have been able to observe, however, I should say that the prettiness which has descended to some of the

women fails to awaken any old-time sentiment or gallantry on the part of the men. There has, I learn, been a gradual decay of the erotic sentiment, which doubtless accounts for the indifference among the men; a decay which is due to the peculiar relations brought about by the emancipation of woman.

It is now nearly two hundred years since women have enjoyed the same freedom and rights as men. It is interesting and curious to note the changes, both upon the character and nature of the two sexes, which has been the result of this development. One's first impression, in coming here, is that women are the sole inhabitants of the country. One sees them everywhere—in all the public offices, as heads of departments, as government clerks, as officials, as engineers, machinists, aeronauts, tax collectors, firemen, filling, in fact, every office and

may change when I come to know them better.

It is late and I must close.

Ever yours, W.

III.

Curiously enough, my dear fellow, the very next day after dispatching my last, I found myself involved in a long and most interesting conversation with the daughter of one of the city residents. I had brought letters of introduction to a certain gentleman, and after a search of some hours through the eternal labyrinth of these unending streets, found the house to which I had been directed. The gentleman, or rather citizen, as all men are called here, was not at home. I was, however, received by his

ensued: a foreign court being willing to concede any thing rather than to continue negotiations with women-diplomatists. But this of course, is to be put down to pure maliciousness. Women since time immemorial, have had the best of man whenever it came to contests of the tongue, and this appears to be the one insignia of their former prestige which the sex insists on claiming.

In my next I shall try to give you some conception of the position which man occupies, as a citizen and as worker in this community. I shall, I think, also be able to give you some most interesting results of the effects produced by the communistic, socialistic principles which have been incorporated into the constitution of this people.

It is late and I am weary, so farewell for a few days. Ever and ever, ————.

V.

_____;

More and more, as I study these institutions, am I reminded of the resemblance between these American socialists and the ancient Spartans. The Spartan was also a part of the State—had all things on a grand Communal scale—had public games, public theaters, baths, museums and festivals, being brought up by the state and his womenkind considered as a part of it.

In this modern community, however, there are two important features which the simpler Spartans did not have to cope with.

The Greeks stood at the dawn of civilization. The American finds himself at what he considers is the completion of it. Break away from his past as hard as ever he may try, he has still found himself heir to this past, and his heredity dominates him in spite of all his attempts to throw it off. The Greeks also were a warlike people, and the American is a peace lover, preferring the pipe to the sword. Perhaps above all else in the sum of these differences ought we to remember, the great factor of machinery as a substitute for manual labor. The sword raised man out of the dust. The piston has levelled him with it. I believe, my dear Hannevig, that if machinery had never been invented, socialism would never have been dreamed of. Machinery was the true cause of the conflict between capital and labor, and not

the unequal distribution of land, as the great founder of this Communal Society, Henry George, asserted in this book, the bible of this people. Machinery needed capital to run it, and was more or less indifferent to labor. The laborer, with machinery as his rival, stood a far less possible chance of becoming a capitalist himself than he did when battling against men; his duties more and more closely resembling in their monotony and routine, the very machine that he was called on to feed, in turn re-acting in his natural aptitude.

However, to go into the depths of this knotty question involves too much space for a letter. Let me, instead recall to your mind, as I have recently done to my own, the chief features of importance in the history of this people which have placed them where they now are.

You recollect, of course, the terrible reign of

blood that took place during the awful conflict between the republican Americans and the socialists and anarchists in 1900. The war began, nominally, as an act of resistance on the part of the Americans against the encroaching and insistent demands of the socialists, demands covering the abolishment of private ownership in land, of the division of property, both real and personal, and the overthrow, generally of all the then existing economic and social institutions. These socialists and anarchists represented the foreign element in the country, those who had imported their revolutionary doctrines with them. (If I remember rightly the early Americans had given all rights of citizenship to this foreign contingency, in a moment of mistaken Republican zeal, a political mistake they lived to rue bitterly later). Well, at first in this anarchist war, the Ameri-

cans won, did they not? I find my memory tripping me at times—possibly would have continued to win had the war been conducted on strict military tactics. But the anarchists finding themselves unsuccessful as soldiers and warriors, resorted to the ingenious means of destroying their enemies by the use of explosives. Dynamite accomplished what the cannon and the bayonet were powerless to effect. Towns, cities and even the villages and hamlets, were lighted by the torch of electricity and seared level with the ground. Dynamite was reserved for the armies and for individual offenders. During that reign of destruction, it seemed as if not a man, woman or child would survive to carry even the memory of the great tragedy to their graves with them.

However, since the anarchist's plan was to reconstruct the whole face of society on a new

basis, it was to be expected, of course, that the revolution they undertook as the means of effecting this would be carried through at whatever cost.

There is one feature of this war which has always struck me as possessing a very humorous side. The anarchists, you remember, were foreigners, chiefly Germans, Irishmen and a few Russians. When the war was ended, by the destruction of very nearly all the Republican contingency, the anarchists broke out into dissension among themselves. The German element would not submit to Irish dictation—the latter leaders having, apparently, a great opinion of their own talent for political leadership—and the Irish in turn violently resisted the German dicta. A veritable anarchy ensued a war so fierce that it looked at one time as if the whole continent might be left a howling

wilderness, with neither conqueror nor conquered to enter and take possession of what was now, in truth, but a desert. Fortunately, however, a few of the Americans had survived. Among them were some of the descendants of the ancient New England statesmen. These men, although under sentence of death, were liberated, that they might act as peacemakers between the two factions. Americans, you see, had had so much experience in reconciling, conciliating and pacifying the difficulties between the Irish and German parties during the American Republican era, that these survivors were eminently fitted to adjust affairs at issue between them now. The American Council decided that the Irishmen should draw up the laws and regulations for the new Communal and Socialistic constitution, while the Germans should see that the

vocation in civil, political and social life. The few men—by comparison, whom I saw seemed to me to be allowed to exist as specimen examples of a fallen race. Of course, this view is more or less exaggeration. But the women here do appear to possess by far the most energy, vigor, vitality and ambition. Their predominance in office just now is owing to their over-powering number, the women's vote polled being ten to one over that of the men. This strong sex influence has been fruitful in greatly changing and modifying the domestic, social and political laws of the community.

Women, for instance, having satisfactorily emancipated themselves from the bondage of domestic drudgery and the dominion of servants, by means of the improvement in machinery and the invention of the famous culinary conduits, found one obstacle still in their path

to complete and co-equal man-freedom. There still remained the children to be taken care of and brought up. As motherhood came in course of time to be considered in its true light, as perhaps the chief cause of the degradation of women, it was finally abolished by act of legislature. Women were still to continue to bear children, or else the socialistic society itself would cease to be. A law was passed providing that children almost immediately after birth, should be brought up, educated and trained under state direction to be returned to their parents when fully grown, and ready for their duties as men and women citizens. In this way women stand at last on as absolutely equal a physical plane with men as it is possible to make them.

It has followed, of course, that with the jurisdiction of the state over the children of the

community, all family life has died out. Men and women live together as man and wife, but the relation between them has become more nominal than real. It is significant of the changes that have been brought about between the sexes, that the word "home" has entirely dropped out of the language. A man's house has in truth ceased to be his home. There are no children there to greet him, his wife, who is his comrade, a man, a citizen like himself, is as rarely at home as he. Their food can be eaten anywhere—there is no common board; there is not even a servant to welcome the master with a smile. The word *wife* has also lost all its original significance. It stands for nothing. Husband and wife are in reality two men having equal rights, with the same range of occupation, the same duties as citizens to perform, the same haunts and the same dreary leisure.

Is it therefore, my dear Hannevig, to be wondered at, that all ideas of love, and that all strong mutual attraction and affections should have died out between the sexes? Man loves, longs for passionately and protects with tender solicitude only that which is difficult to conquer. The imagination must at least be inflamed. But where there is no struggle, no opposition, no conditions which breed longing, desire, or the poetry of a little healthy despair, how is love or any sentiment at all to be awakened or kindled? Here there is no parental authority to make a wall between lovers, nor is there inequality of fortunes, nor any marked difference between the two sexes, even in their daily duties or in their lives. I am more and more impressed with the conviction, as I look into this question—this question of what we should consider the growth of an abnormal indifference

between the sexes—that the latter cause is perhaps the one which has been chiefly instrumental in the bringing about so complete a change over the face of the passions. Woman has placed herself by the side of man, as his co-equal in labor and vocation, only to make the real distance between them the greater. She has gained her independence at the expense of her strongest appeal to man, her power as mistress, wife and mother. How can a man get up any very vivid or profound sentiment or affection for these men-women—who are neither mothers nor housekeepers, who differ in no smallest degree from themselves in their pursuits and occupation? Constant and perpetual companionship, from earliest infancy to manhood and old age has resulted in blunting all sense of any real difference between the sexes. Whatever slight inequalities may still exist between men

and women in the matter of muscular energy or physical strength is more than counterbalanced by the enormous disproportion between them, numerically, as voters.

Some very curious and important political changes have been effected by the preponderance of the woman's vote.

Wars, for instance, have been within the last fifty years declared illegal. Woman found that whereas she was eminently fitted for all men's avocations in time of peace, when it came to war she made a very poor figure of a soldier. Wars, therefore, were soon voted down ; foreign difficulties were adjusted by arbitration. As women, as a rule, were sent on these foreign diplomatic missions, I have heard it wickedly whispered that the chief cause of the usually speedy conclusion of any trouble with a foreign court was because of the babel of tongues which

For over a hundred and fifty years, now, this ideal socialistic society had existed, and what are the results? No people ever assuredly had a more wonderful chance at constructing a society on an ideal basis than had these socialists. Think of it! An entire continent at their disposal, their enemies or opponents all killed or in exile, and they themselves united in desire and in political interest. Well, if some of the ineradicable, indestructible principles in human nature could be changed as easily as laws are made and unmade, the chances for an ideal realization of the happiness of mankind would be the more easily attained. But the Socialists committed the grave error of omitting to count some of these determining human laws into the sum of their calculations.

Time and paper are, however, finite, and also, presumably, your patience. I will post-

pone until my next the few remaining conclusions to which a brief study of this people and their government have led.

Your faithful

WOLFGANG.

VI.

DEAR FRIEND: The longer I stay here the more I am impressed with the profound melancholy which appears to have taken possession of this people. The men, particularly, seem sunk in a torpor of dejection and settled apathy. The women, although by no means so vivacious and vigorous as our women, are, however, far more animated, and seem to have a keener relish for life, than the men. Probably

the comparatively recent emancipation of the women, their new political and social freedom, adds a zest to the routine of life here which men do not feel.

So universal is the dreary aspect of the people, whether at work or play—and they play, I observe, far more languidly than they work—that the type of face among them has undergone a strange and interesting transformation. You remember in the old prints the typical "Yankee" face, with its keen, penetrating eye, its courageous, determined chin, its intelligent brow, and its extraordinarily shrewd and intently alert expression. This vivacity and energy, once the chief charm of the American face, has entirely disappeared. In its stead, imagine wooden, almost sodden features, heavy, dull eyes, receding chins, and a brow on which dullness that very nearly approaches stupidity is

writ in large letters. On all the faces is a stereotyped expression, a mingling of discontent and dejection. There is the same lack of variety of types among the faces I have noticed, as there is a want of contrast in the houses and streets. The entire population appears to have one face; wherever one turns one sees it repeated *ad infinitum*, whether it be that of man or woman, youth or old age.

I have accounted to myself for this curious physiological uniformity by finding in it simply a reflection of the uniformity seen in the life and occupations of this people. The race having been leveled to a common plane, there has been a gradual dying out of individuality. The inevitable curtailment of individual aims, individual struggle, individual ambitions, has naturally resulted in producing a featureless type of character, common to all. Since, of course, it

is character alone which molds feature, this people, being all more or less alike, have come, in process of time, to look alike. Nature, after all, is only clay in the potter's hand. Man, with his laws and creeds, fashions in the end his own face.

I found it, however, far more difficult to account for the cloud of melancholy and dejection which appears to have settled upon this people, than to seek the causes of the above physiological aspect. I asked myself, again and again, why should this people, of all people, be full of this discontent and unhappiness? Haven't they come to the realization of all their dreams? Have they not attained to the very summit and to the full glory of the possession of their social, civic and political desires and aspirations? Is there not equality of sex? Has not leisure instead of labor be-

come a law? Is not private property abolished —is not the land the property of the State— the wage system become a thing of the past, and the possession of capital made a crime punishable by law? Does not the State also exist for the people, educating them, training them for their work in life, distributing among them any surplus funds that the public treasury may accumulate, and furnishing for their amusement and leisure a vast system of educational clubs, educational theaters, public games, museums and shows? If a people are not happy under such conditions, what will insure content?

Yet come with me. Let us walk through the principal thoroughfares, and watch the multitudes of people wandering listlessly up and down the streets; let us see them as they drift aimlessly into the theaters, museums, clubs; let

us look in on them as they idly finger the new books and newspapers, yawning over them as they read, and you will agree with me, that the entire population seems to have but one really serious purpose in life—to murder time which appears to be slowly killing them.

After much thought on the reasons of this strange apathy, this inertia, and sloth of energy, I have come to two conclusions which have helped me to solve the problem of this people's unhappiness. My first conclusion is that the people are dying for want of work; of downright hard work; my second conclusion is that in trying to establish the law of equality, the founders of this ideal community committed the fatal mistake of counting out those indestructible, ineradicable human tendencies and aspirations which have hitherto

been the source of all human progress, to which I alluded in my last letter.

First, let us take the subject of work. As all work, men and women alike, and as machinery has been brought here to a wonderful degree of perfection, the actual labor necessary to maintain the people is, of necessity, very light. At first, a hundred or so years ago, in the early days of the community, the time of labor was fixed at five hours per day. But every decade, with the growth of the population, the labor hours have been diminishing. Recently a law has been put into effect, forbidding any one's working more than two hours a day. This latter law has been found to be an actual necessity, from an economic point of view, as a provision against surplus production. A man, therefore, has the whole of the rest of his day on his hands, to spend as best he may.

The original hope and belief of the founders of Socialism was that if the people could only be given sufficient leisure, the whole race would be lifted to an extraordinary plane of perfection; that, were men given time enough, each man and woman would devote himself and herself to the development and improvement of his or her mental tastes and capacities. At first, I believe, such was the case. For at least thirty years there was an extraordinary zeal for learning and self-improvement. But in time, a reaction came. The founders had forgotten to make allowances for the mass of sluggards, idlers, and ne'er-do-wells who are always the immovable block in the reformer's path of progress. Two parties were soon developed; the party of enlightment and the conservative party. Learning being the sole channel for the exercise of individual capacity or individual ambition,

new society was properly organized; a decision which proves the real genius for statescraft which these ingenious Americans possessed. For Irishmen are proverbially affluent of ideas and incapable of putting them into action, unless it be violent action, while the Germans have proved themselves practical organizers and ideal political policemen. The sagacity of the old American Republicans was shown in the manner in which they themselves, in their era of power, had made use of the distinguishing qualities of the two races, when such hordes overflowed the land during the great emigration period. The Irishmen were kept in the large cities, where they were allowed to misgovern the towns to their hearts' desire, being thus given a vent for their turbulent political spirit; while the Germans, on the contrary, were sent into the still unconquered wilderness

to turn it into a garden by their industry and thrift. The American having thus made use of the Irishmen to run his political machinery for him, and of the Germans to extend the territorial lines of order and civilization, secured unto himself all his own time for money making. Hence the colossal American fortunes, which, as we read of them now, seem to us like a tale of magicians. Such a policy must have seemed to a nineteenth-century American as a very shrewd and ingenious way of utilizing elements which otherwise might prove dangerous. The policy was, in truth, a fatally short-sighted one, as was proved later; since it was the enormous accumulation of fortunes in a few hands and the supposed tyranny of capital which wrought to a frenzy the envy and anger of the foreign poorer classes, then under the sway of the anarchist revolutionists.

After the American statesmen had made peace between the conquering but quarrelsome anarchists, these latter set about organizing the new society. Anarchy itself, although the principles for which it had fought and conquered now prevailed, it was found, must subordinate itself to some form or order before it could hope to enforce order upon others.

The Anarchist's war-cry had been, as you remember—Away with private property! away with all authority! away with the State! away with all political machinery! But now the leaders discovered that a belief in the reign of anarchy was one thing, and its practice was quite another. For a time, as you know, there was a terrible period of disorder, during which the grossest excesses were practiced under the name of "Perfect Individualism," "a common property, common freedom, common distribu-

tion for all." After a few years of the wildest indulgence, rapacity, crime, and cruelty—for, of course, there being no government, there could be neither restraints imposed nor crimes punished—the people themselves at last began to cry aloud for some form of government which should include at least order and decency. The Socialists' doctrines were then decided upon as being more in conformity with the demands of the people and with the necessities of organizing a state than were the formless theories of the anarchists.

The leaders among the people, as has been done so many times before in the history of the world, began again the making of new laws, for the establishment of an ideal government and the forming of a new constitution which was to insure perfect and complete happiness to the individual and the race.

changes in official departments, to carry into effect great international projects. The people, here have ended by contenting themselves with the exercise of only so much executive, political or commercial activity as is found actually necessary to maintain their own existence. Men, whether as individuals or as a collective body, are indeed only actively aggressive, ambitious or audacious in proportion as they meet with opposition. It is struggle, and not the absence of it, which makes both men and a nation great.

I have, therefore, ceased to ask myself where are the old magnificent energies which once characterized this people. One looks in vain for the former warfare of intelligence, for the old time audacity of invention, for the fray of commercial contest, for the powerful massing of capital we read of as character-

istic of Americans two hundred years ago. All this has gone with the old competitive system.

With the abolishment of competition have died out, naturally, all the prizes and rewards in life which came from individual struggle. As accumulation of personal property, in lands or in moneys, and the possibility of personal advancement are forbidden by law, under this form of government, all incentives to personal activity have disappeared. The law of equality, with its logical decrees for the suppression of superiority, has brought about the other extreme, sterility. The crippling of individual activity has finally produced its legitimate result—it has fatally sapped the energies of the people.

It is a curious and interesting feature in one's study of this people, to find that it is not

the establishment of the law of equality which has been the cause of decay in this people, but the enforcement of the opposite law—the law it was soon found necessary to establish against inequality. It naturally and logically followed that if men are to be made equal, such equality can only be maintained by the suppression of degrees of inequality. Mentally, for instance, the standard must be made low enough for all to attain it; each man, therefore, in time, no matter what his fitness, capacity or gift, was forced to subordinate his particular qualities to the general possibility of attainment. This level of a common mediocrity was more or less difficult to inforce and develop. Their own historians record many interesting accounts of the slow death of inequality. In one I read only yesterday, "So instinctive through long centuries of oppression and misuse of power was

the impulse among men to aspire to superiority of attainment, to excel in mental development, or to exhibit richer creative power, that for years the state penitentiaries were filled with men whose crime was their unconquerable desire selfishly to surpass their less fortunate brothers. It is only within our own enlightened twenty-first century that this grave fault has been remedied. Now, happily, no one dreams of insuring his own personal happiness at the expense of others."

And so, my dear Hannevig, the old drama of history is enacted anew. Years ago men were unhappy because the many had to struggle against the favored few. Here, where all are equal, men are miserable because they are so; because all having equal claims to happiness, find life equally dull and aimless. The perpetual moan here is, O for a chance to *be*

something, to do something, to achieve something!

I shall be able to send you only one more letter, as I return in a few days—by balloon this time, I think, instead of by tunnel.

VII.

CHRISTMAS DAY.

MY GOOD HANNEVIG: I have only just time to send you one more incident and scene. It being, as you may have observed at the top of my letter, Christmas Day, I was curious to see how this festival would be observed here. Somewhat to my surprise I observed that the population went about their avocations just as usual. Then I reflected, in a country, where every day after eleven in the morning a true holiday sets

in, there being nothing for any one to do except to enjoy themselves, it would be difficult fitly to celebrate any special fete day. In pointof fact, there are none such. The people voted them out of the calendar, saying they had all they could do to kill the ordinary enjoyment hours of each week without having to invent new games or occupations for a dozen different feast days. So all holidays are prescribed by law except Christmas. This day is kept up for two reasons—because it is thought to be an excellent time to show off the children brought up by the State to the people, and also because on Christmas Day each child is allowed to spend the day at home.

The exercises of the day began at the great Ethical Temple. Here ten thousand children were gathered to listen first to a lecture on the history of Christmas. There was a play in

which Santa Claus appeared and a number of other legendary characters, to show the children in what mythological, absurd beings the children of the unenlightened nineteenth century believed in. Then ten thousand toys were distributed, dolls and whips and tops, and sleighs and skates. But as all were distributed indiscriminately by State officers to the children as they passed out on review, of course all the boys got the dolls and the girls the whips and tops. An hour afterward, outside the great building, I saw groups of the children doing a tremendous exchange, far more interested in bartering damaged dolls for shining skates than in endeavoring to establish the identity of their own parents, whom, indeed, having only seen a few times in the course of their lives, they barely know by sight.

I was slowly walking homeward, speculating

the old baneful system of competition soon developed itself. A superior class, a class composed of scholars, students, artists and authors, arose, whose views and whose political ideas threatened the very life and liberties of the community. The aristocracy of intellect, it was found was as dangerous to the State as an aristocracy founded on pride of descent or on the possession of ancestral acres. It became necessary, therefore, to make a law against learning and the sciences. All scholars, authors, artists and scientists who were found on examination to be more gifted than the average, were exiled.

A strict law was passed, and has since been rigidly enforced, forbidding mental or artistic development being carried beyond a certain fixed standard, a standard attainable by all. Quite naturally learning and the arts have

gradually died out among this people. Where there are no rewards either of fame or personal advancement, the spur to mental or artistic achievement is found wanting. The arts particularly have languished. Art, as is well known, can only live by the strength of the imagination—and the imagination is fed by contrasts of life and degrees of picturesqueness. One of the old American sages, Emerson I think it was, well said of the artist, "If the rich were not rich, how poor would the poet be!" Quite naturally, in such a civilization as this, no conditions exist for either creating or maintaining artistic ability.

Can you not imagine, my dear Hannevig, that under such a system and order of life, time might be found to be a weighty burden? After the two hours devoted to labor, there are still fourteen waking hours to be be disposed of. The

people have, it is true, their clubs and their theaters, the national games, their libraries and gardens. But just because all these are free and at their command, is, I presume, reason enough for their finding the amusements thus provided tame and uninteresting. Most of the inhabitants of this city spend their days at the gymnasium. In the exercises and games there practiced, one sees the only evidence or show of excitement and interest indulged in. Both men and women are muscled like athletes, from their continual exercises and perpetual bathing. The athletic party is now trying to pass a law to permit races and contests on the old Greek plan. But the conservatives will scarcely pass it, as they urge that the Olympian games, by developing the physical powers, was in reality only a training-school for the Greek army, and internecine trouble and dissension would surely

follow any such public games, as they did in the Greek states.

You have, I believe, asked me if the people here are not allowed to find a scope for their superfluous energies in politics. But politics, as a profession, as a separate and independent function of activity, has ceased to exist. The state or Government is run on the great universal principle of reciprocity which governs the entire community. It exists for the people, is administered by the people, and acts for the people. All surplus revenues, derived from a minimum of equalized taxation are turned over to the public fund, being applied to public use. The machinery of the Government is run on the same principle of light labor which governs individual exertions. Each citizen, men and women alike, of course, serves his or her term as a government official, as in old Prussia men

served in the army. As no one is ever re-elected, no matter what his capacity or ability, and as each citizen only serves once during his life-time, there is no such thing known as political strife, or bribery or corruption. Neither is there any political life. The government is as automatic a performance as one of the silk-looms of a factory.

There are certain changes which have lately taken place in the political and international affairs of the people which lead one into a labyrinth of speculation. There has, for instance, been a noticeable and lamentable dying out of international commerce and a general sluggishness of trade which greatly alarms the community at large. All trade and commerce are conducted on the socialistic principle, which forbids the venture of private capital, did such here exist, or of private enterprise.

It is the State which directs all such ventures. But the State, for some reason or other, does not appear to be a success as a merchant or as commercial financier. For one thing, the State is tremendously absorbed in its own affairs. As it takes care of its people, educating, training and developing them; as it looks after the material comforts and necessities of its vast population, its own internal duties really absorb all its energies. Then, in a government, founded as this one is, on a principle of equality, which principle is the sworn enemy of ambition there must of necessity be a lack of initiative, a feebleness in aggressive attack, and a want of determination in the pursuance of any given policy. It is only ambitious staple governments which can command and maintain a definite policy of national action. Even the American republic found it difficult, with its recurrent

on these and other revelations made by a more intimate knowledge of the workings of this great community, when I encountered a familiar face. It was that of my young lady-friend, whose conversation I reported to you above. She joined me and we walked on together.

"I hear you are going back to Sweden; is it true?" she asked.

"Yes, I return in a few days."

"But you have enjoyed your trip—and—us?"

"Immensely. You are a wonderful country."

"That, if I remember, is just what foreigners said to Americans two hundred years ago." (I like this young girl particularly. She is more intelligent than most of the women one meets here. She is allowed to be, she told me, because she was so much less good-looking

than others, which is true. But in this land of dead equality one is grateful for a little intelligence, even if it be served up with homeliness).

"There is one thing I can not become accustomed to," I said not wishing to be called to closer account for my impressions," and that is that there are no church steeples or spires. The absence of them gives such a uniform look to all your cities.

"Churches? Oh, they went out long ago, you know. Religion, it was found, brought about discussion. It was voted immoral."

"Yes, I know. Only I thought a few spires or churches might possibly have been preserved in a kind of sentimental pickle, as castles and ruins are kept in England, to add what an old writer calls "the necessary element of decay to the landscape."

"That was Ruskin, was it not? What a quaint old writer! His books read as if they were written in a dead language. As for the churches, they were all destroyed, you know, in the war between the radicals and the orthodox, and not a stone was left standing. Since then the State has erected these huge Ethical Temples, where all the religions are explained and where the philosophy of ethics is taught the people. The finest of all these temples is the Temple of the Liberators; have you seen it yet?"—she asked.

"I have not, but I should like to do so. Will you be my guide?"

She led me thither.

We soon came to a structure which being smaller, and of fairly good and symmetrical proportions, was a little less hideous than the other temples I had seen. Inside, in the center of

the building was a colossal statue—a portrait it is said—of the founder, Henry George. Around the sides of the wall, were niches where portrait busts of the martyrs stand—the nihilists, early anarchists, and socialists who endured persecution and often death in the early days of socialism. A book I noticed was placed near the Henry George statue. It was the socialistic bible "Poverty and Progress" which with a number of other such books forms the chief literature of the people. Once a year, my young friend told me, there is a sacred reading to the people from this book.

As we turned to pursue our way homeward she again began to question me—"But you haven't told me yet what you think of us—as a country and a people," she persisted.

"Well, since you will have it I will tell you. You are a great and surprising people. I mean

great in the sense of numbers, however, for great, politically and morally, you can never be again. You appear to have attained a certain order of perfection which, however, is only relative. You think you have solved all the great problems; but you have only begun to solve them. In attempting to make the people happy by insuring equality of goods and equal division of property, you have found it necessary to stultify ambition and to kill aspiration. Therefore a healthy, vigorous morale has ceased to exist. In making leisure a law you have robbed it of its sweetness. Ennui is the curse of the land. The arts languish, because the arts depend on the imagination, and imagination has been declared illegal, since all are not born with it. Your libraries and museums are open, but who sees them filled with readers and students? In other words, man having been born heir to all

things, has ceased to value them. And so I leave you, well content to go back to my barbaric Sweden, where the forms of political government are so bad that men wrestle like gods to remedy them, and where men themselve are still born so unequal that they have to fight like demons to live at all. We are still chaotic, and unformed, and unredeemed, and unregenerate. But we are tremendously alive. And so I return with eager joy to take my part in the strife, to be a man, in other words, and not a part of a colossal machine. Why not go back with me? It will be a great experience, you would go back at least two hundred years."

She sighed and murmured: "We are not allowed to travel. It is forbidden. It breeds dissatisfaction. But I wish we were. It sounds so very beautiful and strange." And so I left

her, as I must you, for my letter is a volume. In a few days I shall be telling you all I can not write. Adieu,

Yours,

WOLFGANG.

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